

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 TRSE-00 AGR-05 AID-05 DODE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /071 W

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O 112017Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9724

INFO DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 1433

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, HO

SUBJECT: LABOR LOOKS AT HONDURAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. FROM NUMEROUS CONVERSATIONS WITH NORTH COAST LABOR LEADERS DURING WEEK OF APRIL 7, IT IS APPARENT THAT THEY HAVE DEVELOPED NO GENERAL CONSENSUS ON RECENT CHANGES IN HONDURAN MILITARY OR ON UB BRIBERY STORY. VIRTUALLY ALL UNION LEADERS EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT IS MUCH TOO EARLY TO COMMENT ON THE LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES OF THE MILITARY CHANGES.

2. FESITRANH LEADERS ARE ALSO WITHHOLDING JUDGMENT ON THE CULPABILITY OF LOPEZ IN THE UB BRIBERY SCANDAL. THEY AGREE THAT THE NATIONAL HONOR IS IN QUESTION BUT ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRACTICAL EFFECTS THESE CHARGES WILL HAVE ON THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE U.S. FRUIT  
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COMPANIES AND THEIR UNIONS. THEY FEAR THAT ANY MOVE

TO NATIONALIZE THE COMPANIES WILL GREATLY THREATEN THE INTERESTS OF THEIR WORKERS, THE UNIONS AND FESITRANH ITSELF.

3. FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH SITRATERCO (UNITED BRANDS' WORKERS' UNION) PRESIDENT OSCAR GALE, IT IS APPARENT THAT GALE IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF LOPEZ' GUILT. THE BANANA UNIONS, SITRATERCO AND SUTRAFSCO, HAVE BEEN STRONG SUPPORTERS OF THE GOH ON THE BANANA TAX QUESTION. GALE BELIEVED THAT SUCH SUPPORT WAS THE UNIONS' PATRIOTIC DUTY, EVEN THOUGH THE RESULTING DECLINE IN PRODUCTION HURT HIS MEMBERS FINANCIALLY. HE NOW VIEWS THE EARLIER SUPPORT OF THE TAX AS AN ERROR AND HAS BEEN FORCED TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT LOPEZ BETRAYED THE UNIONS BY PROFITTING PERSONALLY.

4. COMMENT: LABOR LEADERS' COMMENTS ABOUT THE POLITICAL SCENE WERE MARKED BY UNCERTAINTY. THEIR FINAL POSITION WILL HAVE TO AWAIT A DETERMINATION ON THEIR PART OF LOPEZ' GUILT OR INNOCENCE. THEY HAVE OBVIOUSLY BEEN PRESENTED A SERIOUS DILEMMA. THEY WERE SHOCKED AT THE REVELATIONS AND ARE FILLED WITH PATRIOTIC INDIGNATION THAT THE COMPANY WOULD BRIBE THE CHIEF OF STATE. HOWEVER, THEY ALSO KNOW THAT ANY ACTION AGAINST THE COMPANY BY THE GOH WILL LIKELY PREJUDICE THE WORKERS' FINANCIAL INTERESTS AND THREATEN THE EXISTENCE OF THE COMPANY UNIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LABOR UNIONS, POLITICAL ASSESSMENTS  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**TAGS:** ELAB, PINT, HO  
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